

Mississippi Department of Education Office of Curriculum and Instruction

2010 Mississippi Best Practices Dyslexia Handbook



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December 2010

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | ii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | iii |
| PURPOSE | v |
| HANDBOOK COVER PAGE | 6 |
| I. DEFINITION OF DYSLEXIA | 8 |
| A. Components of Definition | 8 |
| B. Secondary Consequences | 9 |
| II. CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA | 9 |
| A. Insufficient Phonological Processing Ability | 9 |
| B. Variable Difficulty with the Alphabetic Principle | 11 |
| C. Observable Difficulties in Classroom Performance | 12 |
| III. TYPICAL AREAS OF DIFFICULTY | 12 |
| A. Oral language | 12 |
| B. Reading | 12 |
| C. Language components | 13 |
| IV. TYPICAL BEHAVIORS/PERFORMANCES OBSERVED AT VARIOUS GRADE LEVELS | 13 |
| A. Grades K-2 | 13 |
| B. Grades 3-4 | 13 |
| C. Grades 5-6 | 14 |
| D. Grades 7-8 | 14 |
| E. Grade 9 and beyond | 14 |
| V. COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DYSLEXIA | 14 |
| VI. IDENTIFICATION OF CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA | 17 |
| A. Cumulative Folders/Permanent Records | 17 |
| B. Dyslexia Checklist for Teachers | 17 |
| C. Parent Interview | 17 |
| D. Dyslexia Evaluation | 17 |
| VII. INTERVENTIONS | 18 |
| A. Specific Instruction for Students with Dyslexia | 18 |
| B. Components of Dyslexia-Specific Instruction | 19 |
| C. Instructional Approaches/Programs | 19 |
| D. Specific Training for Teachers/Interventionists | 20 |
| E. Other Training Options | 20 |

| | | |
|-------|---|----|
| VIII. | ACCOMMODATIONS/STRATEGIES FOR GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS | 21 |
| | A. Purpose | 21 |
| | B. Definitions | 21 |
| | C. General Accommodations | 22 |
| | D. Most Commonly Requested Classroom Accommodations | 23 |
| | E. Types of Accommodations | 23 |
| | F. Instructional Needs | 27 |
| | G. Assignments | 27 |
| | H. Purpose of the Assignment | 29 |
| | I. Types of Assignments and Areas of Curriculum to Consider Adapting and Accommodating | 30 |
| IX. | RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI) | 34 |
| | A. Three Tier Instructional Model | 34 |
| | B. Dyslexia as Noted in the RtI Best Practices Handbook | 34 |
| X. | APPENDICES | 37 |
| | A. Dyslexia Checklist for Teachers – Elementary | 38 |
| | B. Dyslexia Checklist for Teachers – Middle/High School | 39 |
| | C. Parent Interview Checklist | 40 |
| | D. Glossary of Terms | 41 |
| | E. Dyslexia Resources | 42 |
| | F. References | 43 |

PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

The purpose of the *2010 Mississippi Best Practices Dyslexia Handbook* is to provide Mississippi educators with guidelines for academic instruction for students with characteristics of dyslexia. This handbook will provide:

- current scientific-based information concerning dyslexia,
- identification of characteristics of dyslexia,
- identification of the specific components for appropriate multisensory, systematic, explicit, language based reading programs, and
- general education classroom accommodations/strategies.

Mississippi Department of Education Office of Curriculum and Instruction

2010 Mississippi Best Practices Dyslexia Handbook



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I. DEFINITION OF DYSLEXIA

The following definition of dyslexia was endorsed by the Board of Directors of the International Dyslexia Association on November 12, 2002:

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

A. Components of the Definition:

Dyslexia is:

- A specific learning disability...
The broad term “*learning disability*” does not specify the area of difficulty well enough to determine interventions for students. Dyslexia is specific to print language.
- Neurological in origin ...
The student with dyslexia is born with a brain that is structurally and functionally different from the brain of a student who does not have dyslexia. Some of these differences negatively impact phonological processing skills, rapid naming, word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension.
- A brain difference ...
There is a disruption (disconnection) of the brain centers used in reading which causes scattered activity in the right hemisphere rather than focused activity in the left hemisphere. The brain function of a dyslexic student changes with interventions that are designed specifically for dyslexia. (Shaywitz, 1996)
- Characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition...
The student with dyslexia has difficulty being consistent in identifying sight words accurately and in reading with appropriate expression and rate. According to the National Reading Panel (2000), “Fluency is the ability to read quickly, accurately, and with good understanding.”
- A deficit in poor spelling and decoding abilities...
The student with dyslexia usually does not spell or decode words intuitively nor learn these skills implicitly. Phonics rules governing spelling and decoding should be taught directly and explicitly for best results.

- A deficit in the phonological component of language...
Students with dyslexia have a core deficit in phonological processing skills (phonological awareness, phonological memory, and rapid automatic naming). Phonological awareness usually has the most pronounced deficit, particularly in phonemic awareness (recognition, segmentation, deletion, and manipulation of sounds in spoken words). The student with dyslexia may also have difficulty with phonological memory and rapid naming. Phonological memory is the ability to temporarily store bits of verbal information and retrieve them from short term memory (Shaywitz, 2003). Rapid naming is the ability to quickly retrieve the name of a letter, number, object, word, picture, etc., from long term memory.
- Often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities...
Students with dyslexia exhibit reading difficulties in spite of demonstrated cognitive abilities in other areas. According to Shaywitz (2003), a key concept in dyslexia is “unexpected difficulty in reading in children and adults who otherwise possess the intelligence, motivation, and reading instruction considered necessary for accurate and fluent reading.”

B. Secondary Consequences of Dyslexia:

Dyslexia causes:

- difficulties in reading comprehension
- reduced reading experiences that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge

The lack of growth of vocabulary and background knowledge highlights the “downstream consequences of dyslexia,” according to Reid Lyon (2002). Because students with dyslexia do not read as much as their reading peers, their word knowledge and background knowledge does not keep pace with expectations for their age and grade level. Therefore, reading comprehension will be impaired without adequate reading experience, vocabulary, and background knowledge.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA

A. Insufficient Phonological Processing Ability is the most common deficit in dyslexia. Joseph K. Torgesen (1995) defines phonological awareness as the “sensitivity to, or an explicit understanding of, the sound structure of spoken words and the ability to identify, think about, and manipulate the individual sounds.”
Students with characteristics of dyslexia will show deficits in the following components:

1. Phonological Awareness:

- The phonological processing skill that has the most impact on the student's ability to understand the alphabetic principle is phonological awareness. Successful readers have well-developed phonological awareness.
- These deficits in phonological awareness result in difficulty learning phonics through traditional teaching strategies and require interventions to develop these skills.
- Phonological awareness skills normally develop in the following order and should be taught in the following hierarchy:
 - Blending
 - Segmentation
 - Rhyme and Alliteration
 - Manipulation
- The most complex level of phonological awareness involves the smallest unit of speech and is referred to as **phonemic awareness**. This is the ability to recognize the number of sounds in a word, then isolate and name those sounds.

Development of this skill progresses in the following order:

- Sound blending (starting with two-phoneme words)
- Sound matching (initial, then final sound in a word)
- Sound isolation (initial, final, then medial sound in a word)
- Sound segmentation (starting with two-phoneme words)
- Sound manipulation (substitution, deletion, addition, reordering of sounds in words)

Examples of tasks to build phonemic awareness:

Phoneme Isolation: Requires recognizing individual sounds in words. (Example: "Tell me the first sound in the word cat.")

Phoneme Identity: Requires recognizing the common sound in different words. (Example: "Tell me the sound that is the same in map and pot.")

Phoneme Categorization: Requires recognizing the word with the odd sound in a sequence of three or four words. (Example: "Which word does not belong: bin, bun, rag?")

Phoneme Segmentation: Requires breaking a word into its sounds by tapping out or counting the sounds or by pronouncing or positioning a marker for each sound. (Example: "How many sounds are in the word tree?")

Phoneme Deletion: Requires recognizing the word that remains when a specified phoneme is removed. (Example: "What is smile without the /s/?")

2. Phonological Memory

Phonological memory is:

- remembering a sequence of unfamiliar sounds,
- storing sound sequences within words in short-term memory and effectively recalling words from short-term memory, and
- reading and spelling long words.

Strong phonological memory skills are predictive of successful decoding skills, reading accuracy, and larger vocabularies.

3. Rapid Automatic Naming

Automaticity in naming is learned by first learning the name of something, and then having to name it under increasing levels of stress and distraction. Rapid automatic naming is the efficient retrieval from long term memory of phonological information, such as, individual sounds in words, pronunciations of common word parts, and pronunciations of whole words.

Strength in rapid automatic naming skill is predictive of continued development of adequate reading fluency and rate. Graham Nauhaus (2002) considers rapid automatic naming (RAN) to be an integral part of reading and is highly correlated with success in reading.



“Although some children will learn to read in spite of incidental teaching, others never learn unless they are taught in an organized, systematic, efficient way by a knowledgeable teacher using a well-designed instructional approach.”
(Louisa Moats, 1999)

NOTE: Research demonstrates that phonological awareness is more closely related to success in reading than intelligence (Torgesen, 1995).

B. Variable Difficulty with the Alphabetic Principle:

- Difficulty naming the letters of the alphabet
- Difficulty with letter-sound relationships
- Difficulty recognizing and forming letter shapes
- Difficulty with directionality when writing
- Difficulty with alphabetizing

C. Observable Difficulties with Classroom Performances in the Following Skills:

- Accurate and fluent word recognition
- Decoding
- Spelling
- Reading text
- Reading comprehension
- Written expression
- Short attention span
- Handwriting/penmanship
- Oral language development
- Mathematics

NOTE: Be aware that students with dyslexia possess variable and diverse strengths and deficiencies. Dr. Sally Shaywitz (2005) stated, “A dyslexic child has a weakness in decoding, but that weakness is surrounded by a sea of strengths.” In the identification process, be sure to notice any co-existing complications and/or assets that may either exacerbate or “mask” the student’s difficulties with print language task.

III. TYPICAL AREAS OF DIFFICULTY

According to the International Dyslexia Association (2003), individuals with dyslexia may display difficulties with some of the following characteristics:

A. Oral Language

- Learning to talk
- Pronouncing words
- Acquiring vocabulary
- Using age appropriate grammar
- Following directions
- Confusing before/after, right/left, etc.
- Learning the alphabet, nursery rhymes, or songs
- Understanding concepts and relationships
- Retrieving words or naming problems

B. Reading

- Learning to read
- Identifying or generating rhyming words or counting syllables in words (Phonological Awareness)
- Hearing and manipulating sounds in words (Phonemic Awareness)
- Distinguishing different sounds in words (Auditory Discrimination)
- Learning the sounds associated with letters
- Remembering names and/or shapes of letters
- Reversing letters or the order of letters when reading
- Misreading or omitting common small words

- Stumbling through longer words
- Comprehending during oral or silent reading
- Reading slow and laboriously

C. Language Components

- Processing printed language
 - naming letters
 - recognizing letters of the alphabet
 - recognizing words as units
 - reading words, phrases, sentences
- Producing written language
 - handwriting (letter shapes)
 - spelling
 - expressive writing
 - proof-reading
 - integrating basic written language skills with creative writing and comprehension tasks
- Sequencing
 - sounds in words
 - letters in words
 - series of instructions
 - organization
 - study skills

IV. TYPICAL BEHAVIORS/PERFORMANCES OBSERVED AT VARIOUS GRADE LEVELS

A. Grades K-2

- Trouble segmenting and blending
- Poor letter-sound recall
- Poor application of phonics
- Inconsistent memory for words and lists
- Mispronouncing words
- Inability to spell phonetically

B. Grades 3-4

- Poor phonetic decoding
- Inconsistent word recognition
- Over reliance on context and guessing
- Difficulty learning new words (spoken)
- Confusion about other symbols (math and music)

C. Grades 5-6

- Poor spelling and punctuation
- Reverts to manuscript from cursive
- Difficulty organizing writing
- Decodes laboriously, skips unknown words
- Avoids reading, vocabulary declines

D. Grades 7-8

- Reads slowly, loses the meaning
- Persistent phonological weakness
- Poor spelling and writing
- Confuses similar words
- Responds best with structured, explicit teaching of language

E. Grade 9 and beyond

- Difficulty with foreign language study
- Persistent writing and spelling difficulties
- Slow and laborious reading
- Difficulty with larger writing assignments

Louisa Moats (2004)

V. COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DYSLEXIA

A. “Students outgrow dyslexia.”

FACT: Dyslexia is neurological in origin and is a lifelong learning disability. Students with dyslexia can overcome some of their academic difficulties with early identification and intervention but they will always have dyslexia.

B. “Students with dyslexia see letters and words backwards.”

FACT: Dyslexia does not cause students to see letters and words backwards. Some students may confuse similar letters, misread similar words, and have trouble forming letters due to their lack of phonological skills (Louisa Moats, 1999). “They have difficulty attaching appropriate labels and names to letters and words; they do not see them backwards.” (Shaywitz, 2003)

C. “Dyslexia is very rare.”

FACT: The prevalence of dyslexia is between 10% and 15% of any population.

D. “There is a test for dyslexia.”

FACT: There is no single test for dyslexia. A comprehensive battery of tests should be administered. This battery should assess phonological processing, oral language, alphabet knowledge, decoding, word recognition, reading fluency, reading comprehension, spelling, written expression, and cognitive functioning.

A “dyslexia screener” can be used to identify students with characteristics of dyslexia.

E. “Dyslexia is a medical problem, so only medical doctors can diagnose dyslexia.”

FACT: The problem is educational; therefore, the diagnosis is educational, although evaluation may involve pediatricians or other members of the medical community. Assessment can be administered by educators who are knowledgeable of the characteristics in dyslexia and also are familiar with the instruments and procedures for identifying the characteristics of dyslexia.

F. “Dyslexia cannot be identified until 3rd grade.”

FACT: Early intervention is critical to the success of students with dyslexia. Educators need to assess kindergarten students’ phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, and speed of naming and sound-symbol matching because these skills predict reading success in first and second grade. Dyslexia can definitely be identified by the mid-point of first grade after students have been exposed to effective scientific research-based reading instruction.

G. “Dyslexia is a general, catch-all term.”

FACT: Dyslexia is a specific term for a learning disability that is neurological in origin and is specific to print language. The research-based definition of dyslexia adopted by the International Dyslexia Association and supported by the National Institutes of Health provides clear delineation of the characteristics of dyslexia.

H. “Dyslexia is a newly discovered disorder.”

FACT: The concept of this type of developmental reading disability was first recognized in 1877 by Adolph Kussmaul and confirmed by J. Pringle Morgan in 1896. The disability was termed “*dyslexia*” and came into general use in the 1960s.

I. “Students with dyslexia do not understand phonics, so they cannot be taught to read” and/or “Students with dyslexia do not understand phonics, so they should be taught using whole word methods that avoid phonics.”

FACT: Although these students may not have natural intuitive ability in phonics, they can learn decoding and spelling rules if taught directly and explicitly. With early identification and effective research-based, intensive, systematic, multi-sensory, structured-language intervention designed specifically for students with dyslexia, these students can be successful in learning to read and write.

J. “Dyslexia is caused by poor teaching or exposure to whole word methods.”

FACT: Poor instruction does not cause dyslexia but can exacerbate the reading difficulty. Conversely, effective instruction promotes reading success and alleviates many difficulties associated with dyslexia. Louisa Moats (1999) states, “Studies have shown that whole word methods are generally the least successful for students with reading disabilities. Teaching directly about sounds, letters,

words, sentences, and discourse is the most effective treatment for dyslexia, regardless of the student's apparent learning style."

K. "If dyslexic students would just try harder they would succeed."

FACT: Dyslexia is the result of a neurological difference beyond the control of the student. Motivation is not usually the primary problem for the student with dyslexia but may become a secondary problem because of continued lack of success in academic endeavors.

L. "Dyslexia is caused by brain damage."

FACT: The exact causes of dyslexia are not completely clear, but anatomical and brain imagery studies show differences in the way the brain of a dyslexic person develops and functions. The neurological differences associated with developmental dyslexia are genetic rather than the result of brain injury, damage or disease.

M. "Dyslexia is a special education issue and should be dealt with through the special education process."

FACT: The crucial factor for students with dyslexia is to have early identification followed by effective, scientific research-based instruction designed for dyslexia. Dyslexia intervention is most effectively provided within the school's general education program as a Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention. {See Section IX, page 34, for more information on dyslexia within Response to Intervention (RtI).} The key to success is to provide students with an educator who has been well trained in a specialized curriculum designed specifically for dyslexia.



"Teaching matters. You can change a child's brain when it comes to reading."

Dr. Sally Shaywitz (2003)

VI. IDENTIFICATION OF CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA

The following process of identification is suggested as a model or an example. It provides the framework for identifying a pattern of typical strengths and deficits found in dyslexia. Implementing this process can effectively identify students with characteristics of dyslexia who should be matched to a multisensory, systematic, and explicit reading curriculum developed for dyslexia.

Identification Components:

A. Cumulative Folders/Permanent Records

The following information may be significant in considering causes of academic difficulties:

- attendance
- curriculum-based assessments
- educational experience
- medical information
- vision screening
- hearing screening
- cognitive abilities
- nonverbal measures
- problem solving/math competence
- receptive language

B. Dyslexia Checklist for Teachers (See Appendices A and B)

This is a screening measure for students who are perceived as struggling readers and/or those who have not made adequate progress in reading.

C. Parent Interview (See Appendix C)

This is an example of questions that can be used with the parent/guardian in an informal manner to obtain optimal information and insight into pertinent background information. The teacher will generally serve as the scribe, while the parent answers the questions orally. The interviewing teacher may expand upon any of the questions as needed.

D. Dyslexia Evaluation

In addition to the information obtained through the review of cumulative folders/permanent records, a dyslexia checklist, and/or parent interview, various other areas of assessment may be considered. The student's reading difficulties and characteristics of dyslexia will be reflected or supported by low performance for the student's age and educational level in some or all of the following skill areas:

- Oral language
- Phonological processing skills

- Phonological awareness, with an emphasis on phonemic awareness
- Phonological memory
- Rapid automatic naming
- Letter knowledge (name and write letters in alphabetical order/recognize and name letters presented in random order)
- Reading words in isolation
- Reading comprehension
- Decoding (real and nonsense words)
- Spelling
- Fluency/rate and accuracy

Based on the student’s academic difficulties and characteristics, additional areas that may be considered include vocabulary, written expression, handwriting, and mathematics.

VII. INTERVENTIONS

Any program that is used for dyslexia intervention should have been originally designed only for students with dyslexia. Interventions based upon traditional reading instructional programs and only adapted for students with dyslexia should be avoided because they will not include all of the components necessary for success.

A. Specific Instruction for Students with Dyslexia

The National Reading Panel (NRP) emphasized the importance of providing students with reading instruction supported by scientifically-based research consisting of five key components - phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. While students with dyslexia may derive some benefit from this instruction as described by the NRP for typical developing readers, they are not likely to overcome reading difficulties without reading instruction specifically designed for dyslexia.

In order for a student with dyslexia to achieve the goal of reading efficiently, appropriate dyslexia-specific reading, writing, and spelling instruction should be offered in a one-on-one or small group setting. Dyslexia intervention strategies utilize individualized, intensive, explicit and multisensory methods.



“To read efficiently, students must apply letter-sound correspondences, blend sounds together to read words, and recognize that some words are irregular. In addition, they must learn that when they do not understand something they are reading, they can use comprehension and vocabulary strategies to construct meaning from the text.”

S. Vaughn and S. Linan-Thompson, 2004

B. Components of Dyslexia-Specific Instruction

Components of instruction in programs that are specifically designed for dyslexia include:

- Phonemic awareness instruction that enables students to detect, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in spoken language;
- Systematic phonics instruction that takes advantage of the letter-sound association in which words that carry meaning are made of sounds and sounds are written with letters in the right sequence. Students with this understanding can blend sounds associated with letters into words and can separate words into component sounds for spelling and writing;
- Language structure instruction that encompasses morphology (the study of meaningful units of language such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots), semantics (ways that language conveys meaning), syntax (sentence structure), and pragmatics (how to use language in a particular context);
- Linguistics instruction directed toward proficiency and fluency with the patterns of language so that words and sentences are the carriers of meaning; and
- Process-oriented instruction to teach explicitly and directly the procedures or strategies for decoding, encoding, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension for skills that students need to become independent readers.

NOTE: Without a curriculum specifically designed for students with dyslexia, these students will be unlikely to become successful and efficient readers.

C. Instructional Approaches/Programs

The following instructional approaches are components of *multisensory, systematic, specific language-based* reading programs that are specifically designed for dyslexia:

- Explicit, direct instruction that is systematic (structured), sequential, and cumulative. Instruction is organized and presented in a way that follows a logical sequential plan, fits the nature of language (alphabetic principle) with no assumption of prior skills or language knowledge, and maximizes student engagement. This instruction proceeds at a rate commensurate with students' needs, ability level, and demonstration of progress;
- Individualized instruction that meets the specific learning needs of each individual student in a small group setting using a reading curriculum that matches each student's individual ability level;

- Intensive, highly concentrated instruction that maximizes student engagement, uses specialized methods and materials, and produces results;
- Meaning-based instruction that is directed toward purposeful reading and writing, with an emphasis on comprehension and composition; and
- Multisensory instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile) during teacher presentations and student practice.

All multisensory, systematic, specific language-based instructional programs will require specific and intensive training for the teacher or facilitator(s). Consult the vendor for training, materials, or other components necessary for the success of each program or curriculum.

D. Specific Training for Teachers/Interventionists

There are dyslexia training courses developed specifically to prepare educators to provide structured language intervention techniques and strategies needed for students with dyslexia.

These courses should incorporate the following specialized skills:

- phonology and decoding skills,
- handwriting,
- composition,
- reading fluency and comprehension,
- writing mechanics and spelling, and
- learning strategies and study skills.

E. Other Training Options

Since trained, certified Academic Language Therapists are limited in number, dyslexia intervention is often provided through published programs developed for dyslexia. These programs are accompanied by specific training supplied by the publisher, the writer of the program, a certified/qualified trainer, or an accredited center. To provide successful intervention using one of these programs, teachers should receive training and implement the strategies as designed.



“Students come to us as they are. We cannot change them to fit rigid instructional models. Focus on removing barriers in curriculum rather than on lack of ability of students. *Remove barriers that ‘lock students out!’*”

Bart Pisha, Research Center for Applied Technology

VIII. ACCOMMODATIONS/STRATEGIES FOR GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

A. Purpose

Teaching students with dyslexia across settings is challenging. It is important to identify accommodations that are reasonable to ask of general education teachers in all classroom settings. These accommodations can provide a framework for helping students with learning deficits to achieve in a class of heterogeneous learners.

Effective, specialized reading instruction has already been discussed (See page 18). This section will discuss the importance of classroom accommodations/strategies in the education of students with dyslexia. Some types of accommodations/strategies include suggestions for successful implementation in the classroom. Employing accommodations/strategies properly and routinely will be of great benefit to everyone involved – teachers, students with dyslexia, and other students in the classroom.

Accommodations/strategies may make learning more efficient in the content areas for some students. Their disability may make it very difficult (or even impossible) to complete traditional assignments within the usual time frames and/or use print language modality.

B. Definitions

- modify – to alternate or change
- strategy – a plan of action, especially for attaining a goal
- accommodate – to do a service for
- accommodating – willing to help
- accommodation – to meet a need

Webster's II Dictionary

Fairness is not everyone getting the same thing, but everyone getting what they need. Rick Lavoie

C. General Accommodations

In the book, *Overcoming Dyslexia*, (2003), Sally Shaywitz, M.D., makes the following general suggestions for accommodating the disabling difficulties of dyslexia:

1. When the dyslexic student's reading is slow and laborious:

- Allow extra time for completing tests.
- Shorten assignments.
- Provide books on tape.
- Provide screen readers which allow standard texts, eBooks, and other information to be "read aloud" to the student by computers with words highlighted as they are read.
- Initially, encourage students to find alternatives to reading an original work. Suggestions include: movies, comics, streamlined Shakespeare, and modified classics.
- Encourage students to preview reading to identify words they cannot pronounce.
- Encourage students to discuss material with someone to enhance their comprehension.
- Avoid multiple-choice tests, and utilize short answer responses.

2. When students with dyslexia have a basic language problem:

- Encourage them to visualize the material and/or provide images, charts, maps, diagrams, etc.
- Allow for oral testing.
- Do not require a foreign language when possible (Consider requirements for Institutes of Higher Learning.)

3. When the student with dyslexia has handwriting that is laborious and barely legible:

- Allow student to use a computer for assignments in and out of class.
- Provide student with a copy of the notes.
- Allow student to record lectures.
- Grade written work on content rather than form.
- Provide time and guidance for proof reading, editing, and correcting.

4. When the student's ability to give oral responses "on the spot" is slow and labored:

- Allow prepared, short oral reports in class rather than instant, oral responses.
- Do not penalize student for phonological errors.

D. Most Commonly Requested Classroom Accommodations

According to Susan Barton (1998) the most commonly requested classroom accommodations that will allow students to demonstrate knowledge even though not yet reading, writing, or spelling at grade level are as follows:

- Oral testing
- Untimed tests
- Elimination of or reduced spelling tests
- Oral reading only when prepared
- Dictated homework
- Reduced homework load
- Grade on content, not spelling nor handwriting
- Reduced copying tasks
- Alternate assignments
- Avoidance or reduction of using essay tests
- Avoidance of multiple-choice questions due to the volume of reading required
- Class review sessions before tests
- Discovery of how students learn best

E. Types of Accommodations

In the classroom, accommodations to instruction are typically changes that make learning more efficient for certain students. These changes are often termed “accommodations”, particularly when the changes are to “accommodate” a student’s disability.

For example, a person with a physical disability may need a wheelchair, brace, or some other type of device to “accommodate” a lack of mobility. This allows the student to participate in many of the same activities as students who do not need such devices.

Likewise, a student with dyslexia may need changes in the modality of an assignment to “accommodate” the lack of natural reading ability and allow the student to participate in the assignments along with others in the class. This accommodation may need to stay in place long-term, even life-long, or only temporarily until the student has received adequate reading instruction and practice to become efficient in such skills.

It is important to note that, although accommodations in the design of the lesson or assignment may be needed, the mental challenge and level of the assignment should not be diluted. The purpose of accommodations is to provide a way for students with a disability to master the same content and level of assignment as other students, but through another modality.

Typical accommodations in the classroom might be changes that are made in lesson or

assignment design, such as the following:

1. The Approach or Method of Instruction

Reading instruction needs to be an appropriate match for the student's disability provided by a teacher who is well trained in that specialized instruction. Simply placing the student in a small group, giving instruction at a slower pace, or providing more of the curriculum instruction that has not been effective, will not lead to success for students with dyslexia. The method of instruction should be changed. The appropriate approach or method of instruction for those with dyslexia has been fully discussed in Section VII on page 18.

2. The Format of the Assignment

In general, the most common formatting change is to revise worksheets, workbook pages, or other paper and pencil assignments into an activity that requires less reading and writing. Usually, this will involve a manipulative activity that requires the student to *move an answer* on a card or tab to match a question or problem, instead of copying a word into a blank or writing an answer to a question.

3. How the Lesson is Presented

There are several typical ways teachers present lessons to a class, including:

- Lecture
- Discussion
- Reading Assignment
- Experiments and Demonstrations
- Audio-visual

Each presentation style requires certain student skills for success. Thus, the teacher using any particular style of presentation might make assumptions about the students' skills and abilities unless he/she has carefully analyzed the students' spectrum of skills and has planned accordingly. However, with appropriate accommodations for those students who have deficits in these skills, the presentation style can remain essentially the same.

For example, one of the most common presentation styles is lecture (oral presentation). This instructional style requires the following student skills for success:

- Understanding material
- Selecting and retaining pertinent information
- Taking notes from material
- Working with a lot of information at one time
- Having an appropriate vocabulary level

Therefore, for a student who does not have all those skills, some appropriate accommodations might include:

- Providing an outline of the lecture
- Conducting a vocabulary preview
- Providing a one-page summary with major concepts and vocabulary
- Providing a list/preview/review of important facts

4. The Quantity of Reading, Practice Items, Expressive Writing or Other Such Components

Reducing the quantity of reading, practice items, expressive writing, or other such components within an assignment may help under certain circumstances and with some types of assignments, but may be ineffective in other situations.

Reducing quantity may be beneficial, and still provide essentially the same mental challenge, when....

- a. The purpose of the assignment is to practice a skill that has already been presented and practiced in class.

Example:

If mathematics is a strength for a student with reading, writing, and copying skill deficiencies, it would be beneficial for the student to practice a limited number of items to show understanding of a concept or to prove competency in a skill. Completing a large quantity of copying and working many problems may overtax the student's copying, sequencing, and writing abilities, resulting in a product that does not reflect the students' true aptitude or understanding of the concept.



“Adaptations simply take varying learning styles into account and give more students the chance to succeed.” (P.L. Vail, 1989)

b. Too much reading and writing inhibit the learning/comprehension process.

If the assignment is to answer questions at the end of the chapter, the quantity of questions may be reduced with the teacher indicating the most crucial ones to be answered. An alternative is to assign all the questions, but reduce the amount of writing involved by accepting short answers.

Example:

In content area subjects where there is typically a large quantity of reading for comprehension, the student with dyslexia may be given the text on tape, or have it read to him by a parent or tutor. Study aids that can enhance comprehension in this type of assignment are:

- Survey study sheets to help the student focus on the most important information.
- Preview sheets prepared by the teacher to give clues to the most pertinent chapter sections.
- Highlight text for later review.
- Provide vocabulary lists to help the student focus on major concept words.

c. Directions are too complex and lengthy.

Example:

When designing assignments, consider using the following strategies:

- Reduce the number of words in the directions to a minimum.
- Use the same words as consistently as appropriate to limit vocabulary needed to read the directions before beginning the actual work.
- Write directions in sequential, numbered steps.
- Write short, succinct statements.
- Provide graphic assistance when possible.
- If directions include “circle the word that...” help the student draw a circle around the word “circle” in the directions as a graphic reminder.
- Follow this pattern with such instructions as “underline the word that...” (underline the word “underline”), and “put a box around...” (box the word “box”), etc.

NOTE: Accommodations may be needed permanently or at least until the student receives enough remediation and effective reading instruction to become an efficient, independent reader.

F. Instructional Needs

- Students with dyslexia need to:
 - learn in ways that challenge their strengths for academic success,
 - learn in ways that do not constantly use their area of disability for assignments,
 - concentrate on content and comprehension without being overwhelmed by information presented in an inefficient modality,
 - avoid investing inordinate mental effort and concentration on the basics of reading, spelling, and writing at the expense of comprehension, and
 - use technology for efficiency in completing tasks.

- Students with dyslexia need educators to:
 - provide a vehicle for learning that is more efficient than print language for the transfer of information,
 - guide students, as early as possible, to discover the best personal learning strategies for them to use in completing certain types of tasks, assignments, or projects,
 - provide options and strategies for thinking and communicating,
 - emphasize development of strengths, interests, and abilities rather than focusing mainly on remediation of weaknesses and deficits,
 - plan appropriate remediation without making it the only and/or major focus of the school day,
 - provide students with the gift of time to develop talents and abilities,
 - connect teaching style to students' learning capabilities,
 - respect and accept individual differences in learning modalities,
 - provide opportunities for success in learning for students who learn differently,
 - give students a way to express what has been learned,
 - prevent frustration and despair, and
 - help students prepare for college and adulthood by discovering his/her most efficient learning pathways.

G. Assignments

Teachers should answer four questions when determining assignments:

1. What is the purpose of the assignment?

If the purpose is to teach the student how to read, write, or spell, then print modality is the only option.

- Is the class designed for this type of student to be able to learn such basic skills?

- Does this student need to be placed in a class with specialized instruction?

If the purpose is to acquire, express, or practice conceptual knowledge in a content area of instruction, another modality other than print can be used.

- Instead of worksheets, the lesson might be presented orally through discussion, on tape, or by having another person read the material to the student.
- Testing can be done orally.
- Practice activities can be done individually, using manipulatives to bypass the writing process.
- As an alternative, practice activities can be done in a small group setting with students working cooperatively, with each student working in his/her area of strength.

2. What is the best format for presenting a topic, concept, lesson, etc.?

Will the “traditional” or “favorite” way of presenting this lesson be a barrier to a student who has great difficulty with some of its requirements? For example:

- Does it require note-taking, or a good deal of reading, or expressive writing in a restricted time frame?
- If note-taking is necessary, can the student be given a copy of the outline?
- If the student is able to take limited notes, can the outline have some key blanks for the student to fill in as the class progresses?
- Is there a way the lesson can be presented that will be compatible with the limited skills of a student who has deficits in print language?

3. What are the steps required to complete the assignment successfully?

- Can the steps be stated in a succinct way to provide clear sequential instructions?
- Can the steps be modeled or demonstrated?
- Can all students do these steps?
- Is there a way to “streamline” the assignment without diluting its content?
- Can the steps of the assignment that require a quantity of reading or writing be changed to another modality?

4. What are other strategies to help ALL STUDENTS be successful?

- Can students be given a CHOICE of ways to complete the assignment?
- Can a variety of activities be provided, with each student assigned the modality or type of activity that is the best match for his/her abilities and strengths?

- Can assignments be designed on “multiple levels” to address each student’s strengths and deficits without changing the mental challenge of the material?
- Can “accommodations” be built-in rather than “contrived” so that no one appears to be “wrong?”
- Can someone else be asked to read the information aloud?
- Can the text be recorded?
- Can the worksheets be adapted to become a manipulative activity or changed to an auditory/oral modality?
- Can the student be given copies of notes?
- Can tests be given orally or in some other format?

H. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of a lesson or assignment may be to:

- learn content
- practice a specific skill
- learn a process or strategy
- prepare for a test

After the main purpose of the assignment has been determined, teachers can decide which modality, method, or strategy is the best match. The following five questions may be used to guide teachers in these decisions:

1. Is print language necessary?

- If so, what accommodations can be made to make the use of print language more efficient?
- Can the assignment be accomplished by recording information?
- Can it be read to the student?
- Is there another way it can be adjusted?

2. What other modalities might be used?

- Perhaps discussion could take the place of independent reading.
- Is there a way to complete this assignment in a group so each student’s strength is used? Many times, the student with dyslexia is excellent at problem solving. The skilled readers and note-takers can manage the reading and writing parts of the task.
- Could the student summarize thoughts gained from a discussion by recording ideas, reporting orally, drawing illustrations, sequencing “story-boards,” or designing a diorama rather than writing a report?

3. How can the student accomplish this assignment with the most success?

By observing and talking with the student, teachers can learn which strategies and modalities are usually the most successful for each student. Many

assignments can be prepared with choices for completion, suggesting a variety of modalities. See the sample assignment below:

Read the story on pages 28-50.
Choose one of these methods to read the story:

- ***Read the story silently.***
- ***Read the story aloud to someone else.***
- ***Listen to the recorded.***

Choose one of these methods to summarize the story:

- ***Write the summary in 100 words or less.***
- ***Record your summary.***
- ***Give an oral summary.***
- ***Draw pictures to show your summary.***

4. What strategies may be needed?

There may be some specific procedures or strategies that the teacher can instruct the student to use for the particular assignment.

- The teacher may model highlighting techniques.
- The teacher may guide sequence of tasks within the assignment by modeling and talking through the steps: “First, I would...Next I would...Then, I would... Finally I would.....”

5. How can the “gift of time” assist students?

- develop and demonstrate their abilities
- learn and use strategies that compensate for their difficulties
- complete assignments
- produce good quality work

I. Types of Assignments and Areas of Curriculum to Consider Adapting and Accommodating

1. Class Work Assignments

For assignments to be completed during class time, consider that the student may need additional time for certain types of tasks and plan the amount of work accordingly. If the student is overwhelmed by the enormity of an assignment, he/she may have difficulty knowing how to begin.

- Break assignments into small tasks.
- Talk students through sequential steps for each task.
- Give clear oral directions, checking frequently for understanding.
- Provide a print or graphic copy of the instructions when possible for reinforcement.
- After oral directions are given, read through print instructions, pointing to each step.

- Provide desk copies of study helps and guides, such as:
 - Multiplication facts grid
 - Vocabulary list
 - Alphabetical order strip
 - Charts, maps, graphics, etc.
 - Typed outline of lesson, prior to discussion
 - Clock face
- Limit amount of copying from the board.
- Provide a desk copy of information from the board, math problems, definitions, etc.
- Use computers for some writing assignments.

2. Reading Assignments in Content Areas

- Provide recorded text.
- Ask parents to read homework to student.
- Allow student to follow on the printed page while others read appropriate materials.
- Arrange to have assignments, text, and literature read to student, or provide recorded readings.
- Provide survey sheets for preview, study, and review.
- Provide a succinct, one-page outline of the chapter, including major concepts, vocabulary words, and graphics when appropriate.
- Teach and model proper highlighting techniques.
- Devise a graphic symbol marking system for emphasizing points in text. Use the same symbols consistently and routinely.
- Teach students to use “flags” as they read to mark important information for efficient access later.
- Use graphic organizers to retain essential ideas from text, organize them in sequence or hierarchy, compare/contrast concepts or persons in the text, etc.

3. Expressive Writing Assignments

- Avoid the time pressure of completing an assignment in a single class period. (Allow longer time as needed and appropriate.)
- Encourage use of the computer. This releases mental effort for forming ideas, rather than for producing handwriting and other mechanics.
- Use strategies to direct mental effort toward maintaining “train of thought” instead of being “side-tracked” by mechanics:
 - Teach students to draw a line through errors instead of taking time to erase.
 - Allow students to underline words that may be misspelled instead of looking them up while ideas are flowing. Students may go back later and write in the correct spelling.

- Use graphic organizers to brainstorm ideas, organize thoughts, and provide a framework for written reports.
- Help students plan a timeline for the assignment.
 - Provide a syllabus for the entire grading period to alert students to all writing assignment due dates.
 - Plan a starting date for each assignment.
 - Plan deadlines for each step of the writing process for each assignment.
- Help students plan preparation/research.
- Demonstrate sequential composing process.
 - Gather information.
 - Think about ideas.
 - Determine resources.
 - Flag pertinent information in sources.
- Record ideas or dictate ideas to a person who acts as a scribe.
- Transcribe (or have adult transcribe) assignments when needed.
- Organize and format compositions when needed.
 - Organize thoughts into paragraphs.
 - Organize ideas within paragraphs in sentences with proper syntax.
 - Arrange sentences in desired sequence within paragraphs.
- Edit.
 - Check for correct spelling of each word.
 - Check for correct punctuation and capitalization.
 - Check each sentence for correct grammar.

4. **Spelling:**

For students with dyslexia, spelling is learned through a logical, scientific process that should be directly taught as a set of spelling rules, sound-symbol correspondences, and other reliable facets of the structure of English. Students do not readily memorize whole word units, but should understand the sound-symbol correspondences in words in order to spell them correctly.

Asking students to memorize word lists is not an efficient way for them to learn how to spell. In fact, according to Barbara Bateman, students who have difficulties with reading could need between 500-1500 repetitions of a word as a unit before it becomes a part of their long-term memory and can be produced from memory.

Since memorized spelling is not typically successful for these students, reducing the number of words can be helpful, but one of the best accommodations for spelling is to change the method by which it is taught and tested.

5. Testing

The purpose of testing is to accurately measure knowledge in a specific skill or content area. “Tricky” questions do not produce an accurate assessment of knowledge. The major goal of testing is to provide a successful learning experience for the student while measuring progress. Testing should always be approached with a positive attitude and *deliberate*, thoughtful preparation. Carefully plan all aspects of the testing process:

6. Time, space, tools

- Plan for an un-timed schedule whenever possible.
 - Build in additional time as needed for students whose reading skills will slow them down.
 - The anxiety of taking tests is heightened by the stress of time constraints.
- Arrange for a distraction-free, clutter free space.
- Testing language
 - Make sure testing language is consistent with classroom presentation.
 - Adjust the readability level where possible without simplifying the concepts.
- Giving directions
 - Make instructions clear, concise, and direct.
 - Break complex directions into small steps.
 - Record directions for those who need auditory input.
 - Encourage the student to use a highlighter.
- Test format
 - Prioritize items.
 - Place key questions first.
 - Flag items to be given priority time and effort.
 - Arrange items on page in clear manner.
 - Double space when possible.
 - List items vertically instead of horizontally.
 - Use a large, clear font.
 - On matching tests:
 - Use upper case. (There is less risk of confusion or reversals than with lower case letters.)
 - Provide printed answers on small cards to enable the student to place the answers next to the questions.
 - On multiple choice tests, list answer choices vertically rather than horizontally.
 - For essay questions, allow some answers to be expressed in symbols, illustrations, a series of pictures, etc.

IX. RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)

A. Three Tier Instructional Model

The Three Tier Instructional Model was adopted by the State Board of Education (*SBE Policy 4300*) on January 21, 2005. It is designed to meet the needs of every student and consists of three tiers of instruction:

Tier 1: Quality classroom instruction based on MS Curriculum Frameworks

Tier 2: Focused supplemental instruction.

Tier 3: Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the Individual needs of students.

If strategies at Tiers 1 & 2 are unsuccessful, students must be referred to the Teacher Support Team (TST). The TST is the problem-solving unit responsible for interventions developed at Tier 3. Each school must have a Teacher Support Team implemented in accordance with the process developed by the Mississippi Department of Education. Following is the web address for detailed information concerning RtI:

<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/RtI/index.html>

B. Dyslexia as Noted in the RtI Best Practices Handbook (2010)

Following is the RtI Best Practice Handbook Section “Other Considerations” located at the end of Tier 1 on pages 80-82:

Other Considerations

Other considerations may need to be examined when making decisions about what type of services a student should have in Tier 2 or 3 and/or decisions about what type of additional guidance may be needed from other specialized staff (i.e., Section 504 coordinator, speech/language pathologist, occupational/physical therapist, school psychologist, etc.). The three broad areas that will be discussed further are Section 504, Speech/Language Concerns, and Dyslexia. The overview is to provide some general considerations and guidance. These areas are not discussed in depth. The district/school should consult with other education professionals and related documents for further guidance.

Section 504

A student (preschool to 12th grade) may qualify or be deemed eligible for Section 504 if he or she is displaying or has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more life activities. In addition, the child has a record of such impairment and is regarded as having such impairment. It is important to note that a disability must be the reason that the student cannot equally access or receive benefit from the school’s programs or services. There are three prongs of the criteria: (a) physical or mental impairment, major life activity, and substantial limitation; (b) record of impairment; and (c) regarded as having such impairment. Section 504 is a civil rights statute NOT a special education statute. Therefore, it is the responsibility of general education staff

and administration to implement those practices and procedures necessary for a school to fulfill this law's requirements.

A student may not need tiered interventions (i.e., remediation) or special education to access and receive general education programs and services successfully. In addition, a student may not be eligible for special education services and may only need accommodations or modifications to be successful. For example, a student may have a documented disability of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and be regarded as having ADHD. In addition, the student, after further evaluation (i.e., not an evaluation for special education eligibility), demonstrated that the disability limited the student's life activities and had a substantial impairment. However, the student is successful with accommodations within the general education environment. This example meets all the requirements of Section 504. However, a student who has human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) may not have impacts to major life activities or substantial limitations; thus, may not be eligible for Section 504. For further guidance on policies and procedures, please contact and consult the district's Section 504 coordinator.

Speech/Language Considerations

Students who may be displaying speech and/or language difficulties may be considered under multiple areas for remediation. If the student is experiencing speech and/or language difficulties, the teacher or the TST should consult the speech/language pathologist to determine if a referral to the multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET) is warranted for an evaluation for special education.

A language disorder is a neurologically-based condition that consists of impaired comprehension and/or use of spoken, written, and/or other symbol systems. The disorder may involve (a) the form of language (phonology, morphology, syntax), (b) the content of language (semantics), and/or (c) the function of language in communication (pragmatics) in any combination [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)].

When a parent, district personnel, another agency, or TST suspects that a student has a communication (language) disability, a request should be made to the MET for an evaluation. Interventions for communication, including language, are not required for MET referral or eligibility determination.

Dyslexia

If a student is displaying a dual discrepancy through universal screening or other measures, the teacher or the TST may consider if the student is displaying characteristics that may indicate dyslexia. According to the International Dyslexia Association (IDA), dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. Difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other

cognitive abilities and effective classroom instruction. Other consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. These students showing difficulties in reading, writing, spelling, and handwriting may also have difficulties in mathematics.

Dyslexia is not the result of lack of motivation, sensory impairment, inadequate instructional or environmental opportunities, or other limiting conditions, but may occur together with these conditions. If these difficulties in language and mathematics are not successfully remedied, the students' self image and positive behavior may be affected. Individuals with dyslexia frequently respond successfully to timely and appropriate interventions in reading, writing, and language with a multisensory, systematic, explicit language based reading program designed for dyslexic students. Thus, the teacher or TST should consider screening for dyslexia by reviewing cumulative records, the Dyslexia Teacher Checklist, and various other data. The reader should refer to the MDE Dyslexia Handbook for complete guidance on assessment and intervention."

http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/Rtl/Best_Practice_Handbook.html

X. APPENDICES

| | |
|--|----|
| Appendix A: Dyslexia Checklist for Teachers - Elementary | 38 |
| Appendix B: Dyslexia Checklist for Teachers - Middle/High School | 39 |
| Appendix C: Parent Interview Checklist | 40 |
| Appendix D: Glossary of Terms | 41 |
| Appendix E: Dyslexia Resources | 42 |
| Appendix F: References | 43 |

DYSLEXIA CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS

Elementary School

Name of student: _____ Date: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

Checklist completed by: _____

YES NO**PERCEIVED ACADEMIC POTENTIAL**

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 1. Does the student seem to have the intellectual ability or academic potential to develop reading, writing, and spelling skills? |
| _____ | _____ | 2. Is the student's reading, spelling, or writing skills below what you would expect in view of perceived intellectual ability or academic potential? |

READING SKILLS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 3. Does the student have difficulty identifying basic sight words? |
| _____ | _____ | 4. Does the student have difficulty sounding out words using phonics skills? |
| _____ | _____ | 5. Does the student comprehend text read aloud by others? |
| _____ | _____ | 6. Is the student's oral reading slow and laborious? |

ALPHABET AND SPELLING SKILLS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 7. Does the student have difficulty writing the letters of the alphabet in sequence without a model? |
| _____ | _____ | 8. Does the student have difficulty naming the vowels? |
| _____ | _____ | 9. Does the student have difficulty using the correct short vowels in spelling words? |
| _____ | _____ | 10. Does the student have difficulty with spelling? |
| _____ | _____ | 11. Does the student frequently make spelling errors that involve changing the order of the letters within the word (e.g., left/felt or spelt/slept)? |

HANDWRITING SKILLS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 12. Is handwriting often illegible or messy? |
| _____ | _____ | 13. Is pencil grip awkward, tight, or fist-like? |

OTHER SKILLS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 14. Does the student have problems with organization or memory? |
| _____ | _____ | 15. Does the student have problems with spatial orientation (e.g., before/after, left/right)? |
| _____ | _____ | 16. Does the student have difficulty "finding the right word" or seem to hesitate when trying to answer direct questions? |

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DYSLEXIA CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS

Middle and High School

Name of student: _____ Date: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

Checklist completed by: _____

YES NO**PERCEIVED ACADEMIC POTENTIAL**

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 1. Does the student seem to have the intellectual ability or academic potential to develop reading, writing, and spelling skills? |
| _____ | _____ | 2. Is the student's reading, spelling, or writing skills below what you would expect in view of perceived intellectual ability or academic potential? |

READING SKILLS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 3. Does the student have difficulty identifying basic sight words? |
| _____ | _____ | 4. Does the student have difficulty sounding out words using phonics skills? |
| _____ | _____ | 5. Does the student comprehend text read aloud by others? |
| _____ | _____ | 6. Does the student read slowly with many inaccuracies? |

ALPHABET AND SPELLING SKILLS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 7. Does the student have difficulty with spelling? |
| _____ | _____ | 8. Does the student often spell the same word differently in a single writing task? |
| _____ | _____ | 9. Does the student frequently make spelling errors that involve changing the order of the letters within the word (e.g., left/felt or spelt/slept)? |

HANDWRITING SKILLS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 10. Is handwriting often illegible or messy? |
| _____ | _____ | 11. Is pencil grip awkward, tight, or fist-like? |
| _____ | _____ | 12. Does the student procrastinate or avoid writing? |
| _____ | _____ | 13. Does the student have difficulty summarizing or outlining? |

OTHER SKILLS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 14. Does the student have problems with organization or memory? |
| _____ | _____ | 15. Does the student have problems with spatial orientation (e.g., before/after, left/right)? |
| _____ | _____ | 16. Does the student have difficulty "finding the right word" or seem to hesitate when trying to answer direct questions? |

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PARENT INTERVIEW

Name of student: _____ Date: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

Checklist completed by: _____

YES NO

_____ _____ Has any other member of the family had learning problems?
If yes, explain: _____

_____ _____ Do you have any concerns about your child's work at school?
If yes, explain: _____

_____ _____ Has your child received any special instruction at school?
If yes, explain: _____

_____ _____ Has your child repeated a grade?
If yes, explain: _____

_____ _____ Does your child seem to have difficulty following directions?
If yes, explain: _____

_____ _____ Has your child had a speech or language problem?

_____ _____ Does your child need an extraordinary amount of help with
homework?

_____ _____ Does your child seem to have more difficulty in reading, writing,
and spelling than in most other subjects?

_____ _____ Does your child seem to enjoy being read to by adults?

_____ _____ Does your child hesitate to read to you?

_____ _____ Has your child ever been critically or chronically ill?
If yes, explain: _____

_____ _____ Does your child have any physical problems that you feel may
cause difficulty in learning?
If yes, explain: _____

_____ _____ Is your child currently taking medication?
If yes, explain: _____

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Alphabetic principle: The understanding that the sequence of letters in written words represents the sequence of sounds (or phonemes) in spoken words.

Developmental dysgraphia: A severe difficulty in producing handwriting that is legible and written at an age-appropriate speed.

Developmental spelling disorder: Significant difficulty learning to spell. This occurs in the absence of reading or other written language difficulties.

Dyscalculia: Difficulty performing mathematical tasks. The individual's performance is below the standard expected of him/her on the basis of I.Q., age level, or grade level.

Dyslexia: (See Section I, page 8)

Dysnomia: Difficulty with word retrieval.

Dysphasia: A severe difficulty with expressive and receptive oral language.

Dyspraxia: Difficulty planning and coordinating body movements; coordinating facial muscles to produce sounds.

Explicit direct instruction: Instruction that is systematic (structured), sequential, and cumulative. Instruction is organized and presented in a way that follows a logical sequential plan, fits the nature of language (alphabetic principle) with no assumption of prior skills or language knowledge, and maximizes student engagement.

Language-based Instruction: Language arts curriculum, which relates all aspects of language, oral and written, into meaningful settings.

Multisensory instruction: Instruction that incorporates the simultaneous use of two or more sensory pathways (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile) during teacher presentation and student practice.

Phoneme: The smallest segment of sound in a word.

Phonemic Awareness: The insight that spoken words can be conceived as a sequence of sounds; the ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes (sounds) in spoken works (e.g., segmenting or blending).

DYSLEXIA RESOURCES

Mississippi Department of Education (MDE)

Office of Curriculum and Instruction
Jackie Mockbee, Dyslexia Coordinator
Central High School Building

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Physical Address:
359 North West Street
Jackson, MS 39201
Phone: 601.359.2586
www.mde.k12.ms.us

International Dyslexia Association (IDA)

Chester Building, Suite 382
8600 LaSalle Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21286-2044 USA
Ph: 410.296.0232

Voice Message Requests for Information: 1-800.ABC.D123
www.interdys.org

Learning Disabilities Association of America

4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1349
Ph: 412.341.1515
www.lidaamerica.org

Mississippi Library Commission

Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped
Cindy Nugent, Outreach Coordinator
3881 Eastwood Drive
Jackson, MS 39211-6473
Ph: 601.432.4093 or 1.800.446.0892
www.mlc.lib.ms.us

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

381 Park Avenue South Suite 1401
New York, NY 10016
Ph: 212.545.7510
Toll-free: 888.575.7373
www.nclid.org

Reading Rockets

WETA Public Television
Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education
2775 S. Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22206
Ph: 703.998.2001
www.readingrockets.org

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